bearing down upon them; it also denied the government an important eco-
nomic tool.

He recommended that we urge the Congress again to pass the road
program. It was so important, he went on, that he would recommend that
I even consider calling a special session if necessary.

“Well,” I said, somewhat ruefully, “the special session might be neces­
sary—but calling it could be at the cost of the sanity of one man named
Eisenhower.” There was no sense in spending money to call them back
when I knew in advance that the result would be zero.

My lack of enthusiasm for a special session originated in part because
of my awareness of the disappointing record that the Congress had turned
in during its regular session. When that session ended, it had approved
96 out of 207 of my requests, for an average of 46 per cent, far below
that of the Eighty-third Congress (65 per cent), under Republican
leadership, the preceding year. At the final Legislative-leaders meeting on Au­
gust 2, 1955, I said that I was determined to continue fighting on into the
election year of 1956 for the measures the country needed. I was set on
getting the road program.

The next day I wrote to Charles Halleck on the performance of the
Republicans in Congress. Halleck was a hard worker, a driver, and he
had done his best.

“I want to say that the events of the past seven months have confirmed
once again my high estimate of your loyalty to the cause in which we
believe and of your uncommon ability to translate that loyalty into legisla­
tive results,” I wrote him. “As I mentioned at breakfast, in some ways I
have been prouder of our Republican colleagues in the Democratic 84th
Congress than I was of their actions in the 83rd, because time and again
in this Congress we have had clear-cut evidence, from a unified group, of
adherence to the principles and to the sound governmental policies to
which we pledged ourselves three years ago. . . .

“In spite of the fact that your talents and devotion played such a large
part during the Session in enacting badly needed laws, I feel that the
departing Congress laid aside, without action, some extraordinarily impor­t
ant measures. . . . [This] failure . . . gives me the impression that we
have a great deal to discuss with the American people in the next five
months. . . .”
rily the British and ourselves, although a French delegation was consulted at Casablanca and the Chinese at Cairo. Mr. Roosevelt was largely successful in achieving Allied coordination against the Axis. I doubt that this result could have been reached by any other method. But in the settling of postwar problems, the effort was largely a failure. This one stark fact stands out: Every agreement the Soviets entered into at Teheran in 1943 and Yalta in 1945, was ruthlessly broken, save for those palpably to their advantage. The same holds true for the Potsdam Conference of 1945.

But even this dreary record does not furnish proof of the unwisdom of a President's interjecting himself into international exchanges. Certainly his right to do so cannot be questioned, since by the Constitution he is charged with carrying on our foreign relations. Moreover, postwar criticisms of Presidents' meetings with other heads of government have not been confined solely to those that have included Communist representatives. Some writers—either woefully ignorant of facts or attempting to use powers of objective analysis, without noticeable success—have flately proclaimed that nothing can ever be gained by a President's interjecting himself into international exchanges. Certainly such meetings that might promote greater solidarity between nations that shared a dedication to the concept of freedom and of self-government. But I was still not willing to meet with Communist leaders unless there was some likelihood that the confrontation could produce results acceptable to the peoples of the West.

From the beginning of my administration the possibility of a conference involving the United States and the U.S.S.R. was suggested frequently in the press or occasionally by foreign officials, apparently under the impression that through face-to-face negotiation the Communists could be led to abandon their most dangerous doctrines, especially that of promoting class conflict throughout the world and trying to achieve global domination in the ensuing turmoil. Few of my associates urged me to seek a "Summit"; indeed, almost without exception they were opposed to the idea. Their skepticism was based on the dim prospects of useful results in view of Communist intransigence. Secretary Dulles, in particular, was emphatically of this view. Nevertheless, the possibility was kept alive by editorials and commentaries, all of which had the effect of creating segments of public conviction that such meetings could "do no harm and might help."

I continued to say that I was ready to meet with anyone, anywhere in the world, provided that there was any logical reason to hope that the world situation could be thereby improved. But I was determined, in the absence of tangible evidence of Soviet sincerity, to avoid a premature meeting because of the probability that failure to achieve worthwhile results would dash the hopes of truly peaceful nations and deepen the atmosphere of world pessimism that had come in the wake of the Soviet's postwar behavior.

The death of Stalin early in 1953 and the rise to power of Malenkov—a man who seemed to bear a less fearful and suspicious attitude than his predecessor toward the West—led Prime Minister Churchill, on May 11, 1953, to call for a meeting at the Summit, saying, "In spite of all the uncertainties and confusion in which world affairs are plunged, I believe that a conference at the highest level should take place between the leading powers without long delay. . . . If there is not at the Summit of the nations the will to win the greatest prize . . . doom-laden responsibility will fall upon those who now possess the power to decide." Yet, at that time, his own Foreign Minister, Anthony Eden, it was reported, did not agree with him.

At home and abroad the subject continued a live one. The constant debate—pro and con—assured the persistent interest of the press; so I developed a stock answer to any question about a possible Summit. "I would not go to a Summit merely because of friendly words and plausible promises by the men in the Kremlin; actual deeds giving some indication of a Communist readiness to negotiate constructively will have to be produced before I would agree to such a meeting."

Some two years went by with no positive results in developing a promising basis for high-level negotiation in spite of some new and, we thought, reasonable proposals concerning disarmaments and atom-peace. Then, in early spring, 1955, there seemed to arise a new wave of interest. The Western European Union was now a fact. More and more in Europe and the United States influential voices joined in the chorus. The distinguished Senator Walter George, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee; Edgar Faure, Premier of France; and once more, Winston Churchill, all expressed the hope that a Summit might soon be arranged. On April 5, 1955, Anthony Eden replaced Mr. Churchill as Prime Minister. For some reason, whether because of the political exigencies of his new position or the turn of events in the world, Anthony had now reversed his former opposition to a meeting at the Summit. In the campaign for the general election in May, he announced that he was now in favor.

Almost simultaneously the Soviets took a step that gave at least a
glimmer of hope that they, under their new leadership, might be genuinely seeking mutually acceptable answers. This act involved Austria.

Since 1946, a joint committee representing the wartime Allies had spent years attempting to negotiate a peace treaty for that nation. It held 379 meetings. Up to this time all the nations, except Russia, had concurred in a draft treaty, but for an inexplicable reason, possibly the Communist desire to continue exploitation of the resources of Austria, the Kremlin had shown no interest in giving final approval to the treaty. Now, without prior notice, while speculation about a possible Summit was rife, the Soviets announced their intention to sign the Austrian State Treaty. This news brought considerable relief to the Western powers—and certainly to Austria.

And to most of the world it was interpreted as a deed auguring well for melting the Soviet ice that had frozen fruitful negotiation between East and West. Coincidentally, Western affairs were better aligned and stronger than before; West Germany was now recognized by the West as a sovereign republic and a member of the Western European Union and NATO.

Because of the Soviet's action, and not wishing to appear senselessly stubborn in my attitude toward a Summit meeting—so hopefully desired by so many—I instructed Secretary Dulles to let it be known through diplomatic channels, that if other powers were genuinely interested in such a meeting we were ready to listen to their reasoning.

On June 13, after an exchange of notes, the Soviet Union agreed that such a meeting would be held in Geneva, Switzerland, beginning on July 18, 1955.

I had no illusions, however. As I wrote to Swede Hazlett on June 4, 1955:

Personally I do not expect any spectacular results from the forthcoming "Big Four" Conference. Nevertheless, I should think that Foster and I should be able to detect whether the Soviets really intend to introduce a tactical change that could mean, for the next few years at least, some real easing of tensions. If we do not obtain some concrete evidence of such a tactical change, then, of course, the effort must be to determine the exact purpose of recent Soviet suggestions for conferences and easing of tensions and so on.

A full-scale international conference involves difficult and intricate preparation by each participating government. "Position papers"—documents on all conceivable issues, setting forth the position the government intends to present at the meeting—have to be carefully written and approved. Responsible United States officials have to reach agreements with their opposite numbers in other governments about the schedules of meet-
that the Foreign Ministers of the four nations concerned in the Geneva Conference might meet for a time in San Francisco, where they had gone to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the signing of the United Nations Charter. I had flown to San Francisco to address the anniversary meeting on Monday, June 20; while there, I conferred with Foster Dulles, agreed on the ideas he would offer to the other Foreign Ministers, and then returned to Washington.

When the Foreign Ministers met, Foster at once presented our plan. He proposed a five-day meeting in Geneva, during which the heads of government would attempt only to define the crucial world problems and then issue a directive to the Foreign Ministers to work out the details and conduct negotiations. In general, the routine provided that the Foreign Ministers would meet in the mornings to prepare for the sessions of the heads of government in the afternoon. Molotov initially opposed these arrangements; he later acceded tentatively to most of them.

The exchanges between our Secretary of State and Molotov were later described to me by Foster as the opening guns of the Geneva Conference itself. Molotov emphasized the various moves the Soviets had taken ostensibly to reduce tensions—moves which, aside from the Austrian treaty, were of relatively minor consequence, such as an invitation to Chancellor Adenauer to visit Russia, talks between the Soviets and the Japanese, and a rapprochement between the Soviets and Yugoslavia. Foster, on his part, concentrated on our desire for discussion of the problems of disarmament, German unification, captive nations, and the international Communist conspiracy.

These informed exchanges offered little hope of a truly changed attitude on the part of the Soviets. However, they did not reveal a persuasive reason for canceling plans to go to the conference.

One incident, paradoxically, marred the conference but gave a glimmer of hope. On June 22 the Russians shot down an American Navy patrol plane over the Bering Strait. When Foster protested to Molotov, the latter expressed surprise at this act, and indeed, the Soviet government later issued a statement of regret and paid half the damages—something it had never previously done following an incident of this type.

In Washington prior to our departure, I conferred with Foster to assess once more our own objectives and to anticipate as best we could the Soviet goals and tactics. Foster thought the Soviets would appeal to neutralism, attack power blocs, propose a specious effort to relax armament burdens, such as by "banning the bomb," urge a relaxation of controls on strategic goods sent to the Soviet Union, suggest agreement on a vague statement of principles, propose a "paper" European security system, and seek agreement on a Far East conference to advance the status of Communist China.
The detailed conference arrangements I left to others, for I was concerned about the content of a fifteen-minute broadcast I planned to make on the evening of my departure. I wished to dramatize America's spirit and deep yearning for peace. To do this, I intended to deal with the cardinal religious concepts which form the very core of our democratic society. This brought a protest from Foster Dulles, who feared that I would raise the hopes of our people, who might subsequently suffer widespread disillusionment when they realized that no tangible results could come for a year or more, if there were any tangible results at all. It seemed to me, as I planned the talk, that I could do both—I could warn the American people against expecting too much too soon but at the same time emphasize America's quest for peace and make plain that our main objective was to learn whether other nations also truly wanted, in a conciliatory attitude, to follow that quest. All this I felt would have significance beyond our own borders, particularly in counteracting persistent Communist propaganda that pictured the United States as wholly materialistic in its outlook.

Forty-five minutes before our departure for Geneva, I spoke to the nation from the broadcast room on the ground floor of the White House. I pointed out that Presidents of the United States had left the continental limits of our country before to fulfill duties as Commander-in-Chief of our armed forces in time of war or to participate in conferences at the end of a war to work toward peace treaties. “But now, for the first time,” I said, “a President goes to engage in a conference with the heads of other governments in order to prevent wars, in order to see whether in this time of stress and strain we cannot devise measures that will keep from us this terrible scourge that afflicts mankind.”

There were difficulties inherent in such an undertaking. The President has constitutional responsibilities that cannot be delegated. To perform some effectively he must be at or near to the seat of government. In my talk I acknowledged the cooperation of Congress in holding legislation for my consideration during the time I would be away, and told of my promise to return in a week—that is, by July 24. Obviously, in the time allotted we could not settle major international problems, for they were formidable indeed.

I expressed the conviction that earlier international conferences had paid too much attention to details, or to exploiting nationalistic goals, without enough attention to the spirit in which differences of ambition and ideology might be resolved. The suspicions thus created had meant an increase in armament—and armament created new and greater suspicion. But recognizing the gloomy complexion of the record, I asked, “Do we want to do nothing; do we want to sit and drift along to the inevitable end of such a contest—new tensions and then to war or at least to con-
tuning tensions?” The answer was plain. We want peace, I said, and pessimism never won a battle. Peoples everywhere wanted peace, I said—a peace in which they could live happily and in confidence. To show the world America’s earnest desire for peace, I asked that all Americans, on the next Sabbath, crowd their places of worship—all 165 million of us—to ask for help in this undertaking. This would demonstrate to all mankind that we maintained great armaments only because we must. Our armaments did not reflect the way we wanted to live; they merely reflected the way we had to live. I emphasized that Secretary Dulles and I were going in the hope we could represent the convictions, beliefs, and aspirations of all Americans: “We shall be conciliatory because our country seeks no conquest, no property of others. We shall be tolerant because this nation does not seek to impose our way of life upon others. We shall be firm in the consciousness of your material and spiritual strength and your defense of your rights. But we shall extend the hand of friendship to all who will grasp it honestly and concede to us the same rights, the same understanding, the same freedom that we accord to them.”

Upstairs on the second floor of the White House my talk was seen on television by my family and several close friends—Bill Robinson, Bob Woodruff, Secretary and Mrs. George Humphrey, and Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Moore. When I joined the group a few moments after completing the talk, the meaning of the occasion was written in all their faces. To my delight I received a call from the statesman who had put so much of himself behind the idea of this Summit meeting, Senator Walter George of Georgia. He was full of emotion and his congratulations and good wishes were heartwarming.

But there was no time for delay. Almost immediately Mamie and I began the trip by auto to the MATS1 terminal at National Airport, bound for Iceland, the first stop of our journey. Mamie, although she had never completely convinced herself that an airplane flies, was bearing up like a good soldier on what was only her second trip by air across the Atlantic, a trip on which she was to make such a great, though unofficial, contribution. For her the week was a busy one. Without question she gained in Geneva, and brought back with her, the respect and affection of everyone she met, including those Russians with whom she came in contact.

When the plane reached Geneva on July 16, I was astonished at the size and enthusiasm of the crowds that gathered at the airfield and in the streets along the route to our villa. With four delegations scheduled to arrive during the day and the city presumably flooded with visitors, I had told Mamie and my staff that while I anticipated a correct and routine reception, I thought there would be little public interest in the occasion. I was wrong. The Swiss government and people put on an exceptional ceremony of welcome—as I assume they did for other delegations as well—and quickly succeeded in captivating us with the fervor and generosity of their hospitality.

At the conference the principals who were to represent the United Kingdom were Prime Minister Sir Anthony Eden and Foreign Minister Harold Macmillan.2 The delegation from France was headed by Premier Edgar Faure. He was accompanied by Antoine Pinay, the Foreign Minister.3 Occupying the forefront for the Soviet Union, as the first among equals, was N. A. Bulganin, chairman of the Council of Ministers of the U.S.S.R. He was accompanied by Marshal G. K. Zhukov, Defense Minister of the U.S.S.R., Foreign Minister V. M. Molotov, N. S. Khrushchev, a member of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R., and Andrei Gromyko, Deputy Foreign Minister. How many total members there were in each of the three other contingents was not disclosed, but the Soviet Union took over an entire hotel in the center of Geneva and excluded all other guests.

For the United States, I had with me, as my leading official consultants, the Secretary of State; the Special Assistant for National Security Affairs, Dillon Anderson; the United States ambassador to the Soviet Union, Charles E. Bohlen; the director of Policy Planning Staff of the Department of State, Robert R. Bowie; the White House Press Secretary, James C. Hagerty; the counsel of the Department of State, Douglas MacArthur II; the Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs, Livingston T. Merchant; the legal adviser of the Department of State, Herman Phleger; and the United States ambassador to Austria, Llewellyn E. Thompson. In addition, although not official members of the United States delegation, I had as personal assistants Colonel Andrew J. Goodpaster, Staff Secretary at the White House, and my son, Major John S. D. Eisenhower, who was then between military assignments, having just completed the course at the Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, and scheduled to report to Fort Belvoir at the end of the conference.

Nearly a week before, I had directed that a group of United States advisers be available in Paris on call, including Harold Stassen, who was now my Special Assistant on Disarmament; Nelson A. Rockefeller, my Special Assistant for Cold War Strategy; Admiral Arthur W. Radford, the

1 Military Air Transport Service.
2 As well as advisers Sir Ivone Kirkpatrick and Sir Norman Brook.
3 With Armand Bernard, diplomatic counselor, and R. de Margerie, Director General of Political and Economic Affairs of France.
chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; General Alfred M. Gruenther, then commanding the military forces of NATO; and Robert B. Anderson, the Deputy Secretary of Defense. I felt that I might need these officials for consultation but thought it would be best not to take them to Geneva at the outset.

My tentative plan was to stay in Geneva about one week. This was based on the assumption that nothing much could be accomplished by a shorter stay; on the other hand, damage could be caused by undue prolongation of a conference if it was to be characterized mainly by futile argument and by our combating Russian propaganda. Always in the background was our caution, based on sad experience, that the Soviets would probably be more interested in using the conference as a convenient platform for confusing the uncommitted nations rather than as an opportunity for the exchange of honest views.

Foster and I each had a country villa loaned to us by generous residents of Switzerland. The one provided for my wife and me, the Villa Creux de Genthod, was owned by André Firmenich, a Swiss businessman. It was a lovely place on Lake Geneva, about five miles from the Palais des Nations.

Secretary Dulles had come to the conference by another plane. On the first evening in Geneva, after we had settled down at the villa and had a quiet dinner, we undertook a final discussion on our planned talks and proposals. We had come to this meeting without having resolved all agenda questions with the Soviets. On the problems of a reunited Germany, general disarmament proposals, and a broadening of East-West contacts we expected the Soviets would be willing to talk, though how constructive and concrete the results would be remained to be seen. We knew the Soviets would refuse to discuss the enslavement of the nations of Eastern Europe and the effects on world tensions caused by Communist subversion. Nevertheless I was determined to include these matters in my opening talk so as to leave no doubt of our awareness of their importance.

On Sunday morning Mamie, John, and I left the villa to attend services at the small American church in the center of the city. The congregation comprised, principally, Americans who lived in Geneva; pastors of three different nationalities officiated. One of the high points was the offertory by Miss Fanni Jones, an American, who sang a Negro spiritual, "Sweet Little Jesus Boy," with unusual sincerity and warmth. I later learned from the pastor that she was studying music in Geneva.

That afternoon I spentlargely in preparatory conferences. Prime Minister Eden, Foreign Minister Harold Macmillan, Premier Edgar Faure, and Foreign Minister Antoine Pinay, with assistants, came to lunch and we conferred until midafternoon, when I had a chance to relax a while and visit with Jimmy Gault, the Scots Guardsman, who had been my dedicated military assistant in World War II. At four-thirty Anthony Eden and Foster Dulles came again, and at five I had a final conference with Edgar Faure. We were now as well prepared as we could expect to be for any developments.

The next morning we started for the Palais des Nations, where the conference was to be held. The city of Geneva is normally a rather quiet place. Largely French in character, it nestles in a valley between the French and Swiss Alps on a long, peaceful lake which bears its name and through which the Rhone River flows. The town is noteworthy for cleanliness, a cosmopolitan atmosphere, its sidewalk cafes, and the magnificent fountain in the middle of the lake which spouts a geyser more than four hundred feet toward the sky. The population is so accustomed to international conferences that they are reportedly quite blasé about the host of diplomats and world figures who come to their streets from time to time.

In the demeanor of the crowds along our way, however, we quickly saw convincing evidence of peoples' deep longing for peace. These were not holiday crowds, assembled to shout or wave greetings at figures whose names were known around the world; they were hospitable but serious, friendly but devoutly hopeful. Clearly they were praying that from this conference reliable East-West agreements might open the door to a better era.

The edifice which makes an otherwise pleasant resort city a household word throughout the world is the Palais des Nations; once it housed the League of Nations. Now it provides, under auspices of the United Nations, facilities for high-level international conferences. As I entered the building, I was struck by its enormous size. It has several floors of offices, committee rooms, a library of half a million volumes, a restaurant, and meeting rooms. It contained sufficient space to provide office facilities for our sizable delegations—one estimate put the total for the four nations at this conference at twelve hundred. The Council Chamber, where our conference was to be held, was in reality a square amphitheater. Around the gigantic hollow-squared table where forty delegates would sit in two rows were spectator stands arranged in tiers on three sides of the room. On the fourth wall, facing the United States delegation, there were large glassed-in offices of the secretariat, where minutes were kept and translations were broadcast into the earphones of the delegates.

The decoration of the room was remarkable. On the lofty ceilings were murals done in deep bluish-gray and gold. Directly over the table itself the mural depicted figures representing five of the continents of the world in a circle, with arms clasped. The mural is so designed that the viewer sees the five figures peering down at him, as if he were at the bottom of a large well. Around the five continent-figures are scenes depicting
man's successful struggle against scourges such as slavery and famine. The scenes are arranged to guide the viewer's eye from one to the next, finally reaching the one unconquered scourge, war, where subhuman beasts drop babies down the muzzles of monstrous cannons, tilted at crazy angles. The mural is effective. The brutish characters remind the participant in this drama of the grim seriousness of his task. It is not a pleasant piece of art, but it is powerful and thought-provoking.

At the table with me were Foster Dulles, Douglas MacArthur II, Herman Phleger, and Livingston Merchant. Simultaneous interpretation was handled by professionals. This was smoothly done in English and French, Russian, which takes longer to translate, was first done unofficially, with the speaker pausing periodically to give the translator time. This was followed by an "official translation" into English by Troyanovsky, the accomplished linguist who had once attended the Friends School in Washington, D.C. Hearing each Russian speech twice was a mixed blessing; at least it gave us more time to study what they said.

4 As usual I had with me Lieutenant Colonel Vernon A. Walters, one of the most brilliant interpreters I have ever known. Although at the time he was not proficient in Russian, he was completely at home in six or seven other languages, and when he was using any one of them he seemed unconsciously to adopt the mannerisms of the people of that particular country. At this conference he was especially valuable when I was talking with members of the French delegation.

I am certain I could have been more effective in the many conferences I attended during my Presidency if I had previously mastered at least one foreign language. That I had not was unfortunate, but the deficiency was not wholly my fault. A basic difficulty was my lack of talent for learning other languages, due largely to the fact that I was not exposed to them when I was young. Further, I am of the opinion that those people who cannot carry a tune or readily remember one have difficulty in languages; it is rare that I can distinguish or identify even the simplest words spoken in another language even though I have had a fair familiarity with written texts in the same language. A second difficulty for me came about not because of too little academic instruction in other languages, but because of a too varied instruction. In school I had studied Latin, German, French, and Spanish, but I had never wholly mastered them, and the resulting confusion in my mind had made me incapable of using any one foreign language satisfactorily. In later years, when I was stationed in foreign areas, I had studied French and Spanish under professional teachers—with no appreciable results. I well remember how in 1929, after being under the tutelage of a Monsieur "Freddy" for months in Paris, he expressed his conviction that I would never become much good in French. He said, "Major, you are one of the best readers of French and translators of the written language that I have among my American students, but you are the worst candidate as a French linguist I have ever tried to teach. You should stop wasting your money on me."

To this, out of native stubbornness, I replied: "I'm inclined to agree, but I engaged you for one year of daily lessons and I'm going through with it. I still hope for miraculous progress." It is no wonder that I have such a deep admiration for a man with the abilities of Colonel Walters.

The initial speeches, delivered formally by the several heads of delegations in order to set out their basic objectives, were later given to the press; of course they were written partly with that in view.

As the only one present who was both head of state and head of government, I was accorded the chairmanship of the first meeting. My talk had been prepared in close collaboration with Foster and his staff, but I had labored long in the effort to make it express my deepest convictions:

We meet here for a simple purpose. We have come to find a basis for accommodation which will make life safer and happier not only for the nations we represent but for people everywhere.

We are here in response to a universal urge, recognized by Premier Bulganin in his speech of July 15, that the political leaders of our great countries find a path to peace.

We cannot expect here, in the few hours of a few days, to solve all the problems of the world that need to be solved. Indeed, the four of us meeting here have no authority from others that could justify us even in attempting that. The roots of many of these problems are buried deep in wars, conflicts and history. They are made even more difficult by the differences in governmental ideologies and ambitions.

Nevertheless, we can, perhaps, create a new spirit that will make possible future solutions of problems which are within our responsibilities.

As a preface, may I indicate some of the issues I think we should discuss.

First is the problem of unifying Germany and forming an all-German government based on free elections. Ten years have passed since the German armistice—and Germany is still divided. That division does a grievous wrong to a people which is entitled, like any other, to pursue together a common destiny. While that division continues, it creates a basic source of instability in Europe.

Americans felt strongly, I said, that certain peoples of Eastern Europe had not been given the benefit of wartime pledges of their right to self-government and self-defense.

There was, too, the problem of communication, of human contact. We feared, I said, the consequences of a situation where whole peoples were isolated from the world outside. I went on:
There is the problem of international Communism. For thirty-eight years now, its activities have disturbed relations between other nations and the Soviet Union. Its activities are not confined to efforts to persuade. It seeks throughout the world to subvert lawful governments and to subject nations to an alien domination. We cannot ignore the distrust created by the support of such activities.

Finally, there is the overriding problem of armament. This is at once a result and a cause of existing tension and distrust. Contrary to a basic purpose of the United Nations Charter, armaments now divert much of men's effort from creative to non-productive uses. We would all like to end that. But apparently no one dares to do so because of fear of attack.

Surprise attack has a capacity for destruction far beyond anything which man has yet known. So each of us deems it vital that there should be means to deter such attack. Perhaps, therefore, we should consider whether the problem of limitation of armament may not best be approached by seeking—as a first step—dependable ways to supervise and inspect military establishments, so that there can be no frightful surprises, whether by sudden attack or by secret violation of agreed restrictions. In this field nothing is more important than that we explore together the challenging and central problem of effective mutual inspection. Such a system is the foundation for real disarmament.

I trust that we are not here merely to catalogue our differences. We are not here to repeat the same dreary exercises that have characterized most of our negotiations of the past ten years. We are here in response to the peaceful aspirations of mankind to start the kind of discussions which will inject a new spirit into our diplomacy; and to launch fresh negotiations under conditions of good augury.

In that way, and perhaps only in that way, can our meeting, necessarily brief, serve to generate and put in motion the new forces needed to set us truly on the path to peace.

The British and French opening statements followed. They were harmonious in theme and spirit, though different, naturally, in content. Faure mentioned a proposal for disarmament, which he had discussed with us on Sunday. Eden and I had discouraged him because his plan was toormed effort from creative to non-productive uses. We would all like to end that. But apparently no one dares to do so because of fear of attack.

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But he outlined his plan. He described the continuance of budget limitations would never provide a sufficient measure of protection.

Mr. Khrushchev's main proposal was for "a system of collective security" with all of Europe, Russia, and the United States involved—an interesting if impractical notion. In one phase of his program, the Warsaw Pact and NATO would be dissolved. "The Soviet government is of the opinion that our eventual objective should be to have no foreign troops remaining on the territories of European states," Khrushchev added, his meaning plain that "foreign troops" were ours. He praised the idea of neutrality, added that my notion of discussing the plight of those caught in Soviet satellite countries was "interference in [their] internal affairs," and that depriving Communist China of its seat in the United Nations was "abnormal."

In other words, the Russian stand, especially on Germany, was as before—adamant and inflexible.

Naturally, I was disappointed. But Bulganin's speech was only an opening gambit. Rarely, in the usual tactics of diplomacy, will a diplomat expose his hand in the early moments of negotiations. It was clear that we had to be patient, watchful, and alert if we were to solve the Soviet enigma. What, we asked ourselves, do the Soviets really want? Who is really in charge among the five who face us across the table—Bulganin, Khrushchev, Molotov, Zhukov, Gromyko?

At my villa that Monday evening I gave a small dinner for the Soviet delegation. Foster Dulles, Charles Bohlen, Livingston Merchant, Douglas MacArthur II, Llewellyn Thompson, James Hagerty, and my son John arrived a few minutes early, and Mamie joined us when the Russian delegation came in; then, according to plan, she withdrew before dinner.

Promptly at 8 P.M. the Soviets arrived in a group: Khrushchev, Bul-
ganin, Molotov, Zhukov, Gromyko, and their interpreter, Troyanovsky. It was relatively easy and an interesting silent exercise to categorize them: Bulganin, a genial public-relations type, slightly buoyant; Khrushchev, head of the Communist party and new to international conferences, round and amiable, but with a will of iron only slightly concealed; Zhukov, on hand as a friendly catalyst, but frightened; Molotov, studiously maintaining his reputation as “the Hammer,” and Gromyko, stern, unapproachable, unhappy, with little taste for the whole performance.

For reasons of their own, they were seeking good will, but they obviously also had a goal. They drank little and smiled much, with the exception of Gromyko who, when he spared us a rare smile, did so with the greatest effort. Obviously planned and rehearsed, their efforts to ingratiate were carried out with precision and mechanical perfection.

Their first tactical move involved Zhukov. Within a few moments after their arrival, I found myself talking to Zhukov alone; the others had faded into the background. My son, John, joined us. We reminisced about days in Germany and our visit ten years before in Moscow. Then Zhukov said: “There are things in Russia which are not as they seem.” Without explaining the meaning of this strange remark, he spoke of personal matters; he announced that his daughter had been married the day before in Russia, and that he had missed the wedding. To my protest over this sacrifice on his part, he said that he would much rather be with me, his old friend and military comrade. Such a statement seemed to me a bit unrealistic; I took it with a grain of salt. Upon learning of this event in his family I sent for and presented to him a pen set and a portable radio for take back to his daughter, a gesture which genuinely seemed to touch him.

After a little more strained but friendly and innocuous talk, we went in to dinner. Here the conversation became serious. In an effort to feel my guests out and to stimulate them to speak candidly, I tried bluntness: I pointed out that with the super weapons of today we could easily and unwittingly destroy the entire Northern Hemisphere. “War has failed,” I said. “The only way to save the world is through diplomacy.” All nodded vigorously assent, but nothing much of consequence was said.

One thing was sure: the Soviet leaders presented a solid front; it was fruitless to think of one of them at this time without thinking of all five together. Whoever was boss concealed his identity, and each seemed to exercise surveillance over the others. Despite my failure to induce them to reveal their true purposes and ideas, it was a useful evening in that I saw that the implacability of this quintet in a social situation would certainly be encountered in ensuing conferences and we would have to shape our own tactics accordingly. We broke up early because the next day was to be filled to overflowing with formal sessions.
After further meetings in which with painstaking care we searched the plan for any possible defects and improvements, I was ready to unveil it to the Russians and the world.

The moment came at the afternoon session on Thursday, July 21. Surprise in presentation I knew might be important. I therefore decided to put forward the plan without delay, even without waiting for a final editing of the text.

As soon as it was my turn to speak, I summarized prior proposals for disarmament which involved inspectional features and showed why none had been mutually acceptable.

Then, quickly and partially extemporaneously, I turned to our new proposal.

“Gentlemen,” I said, “since I have been working on this memorandum to present to this conference, I have been searching my heart and mind for something that I could say here that could convince everyone of the great sincerity of the United States in approaching this problem of disarmament.

“I should address myself for a moment principally to the delegates from the Soviet Union, because our two great countries admittedly possess new and terrible weapons in quantities which do give rise in other parts of the world, or reciprocally, to the fears and dangers of surprise attack.

“I propose, therefore, that we take a practical step, that we begin an arrangement, very quickly, as between ourselves—immediately.”

Succinctly, the plan, which came to be called “Open Skies,” envisioned:

(1) The exchange of military blueprints and charts, each prepared by one of the conferring nations, on which would be fully described and accurately located the features of every military installation of whatever kind in the territory of that nation or in its bases abroad. The same would, so far as practicable, apply to navies.

(2) Each nation would be furnished with these blueprints and would, under a coordinated plan, station a fixed number of isolated airfields and detachments in the territory of the area to be inspected. The number of planes, cameras, maintenance units, and personnel and the amount of equipment would be agreed on for each unit. The location and specific inspection missions of each detachment would be determined by cooperative action of the nations involved.

(3) Instructions and regulations to govern operating heights of airplanes, speeds, landing procedures, frequency and route of flights would be determined by the staffs. Each plane would be authorized to include in its crew one or more representatives of the nation under inspection.

To avoid captious rejection for technical reasons, I emphasized that if

the Soviets would accept the plan in principle, we would be ready to meet them halfway in accommodating details to any reasonable suggestion.

As I finished, a most extraordinary natural phenomenon took place. Without warning, and simultaneous with my closing words, the loudest clap of thunder I have ever heard roared into the room, and the conference was plunged into Stygian darkness. Our astonishment was all the greater because in our air-conditioned and well-lighted room there had been no inkling of an approaching storm.

For a moment there was stunned silence. Then I remarked that I had not dreamed I was so eloquent as to put the lights out. This was rewarded with laughter, only because it was an obvious break in the tension, and in a few moments the lights came back on.

At once, the Prime Minister of Britain and the Premier of France spoke in highly approving terms of the proposal. They declared themselves ready to cooperate and to open their territories to aerial inspection, provided only that all present were in agreement.

Chairman Bulganin spoke last. For a time it appeared that the intransigent Soviet refusal to permit any useful inspection system in the U.S.S.R. might be effectively shaken. The proposal, Bulganin declared, seemed to have real merit, and the Soviets would give it complete and sympathetic study at once. The tone of his talk seemed as encouraging as his words and my first reaction was that the assurance of isolation of inspection teams from the populations, eliminating any possible political indoctrination by such detachments, might prove to be a lead to progress between us.

The hope born of this development was fleeting. Shortly after Premier Bulganin spoke, the session adjourned for the day, all members apparently in high good humor. As was my custom, I mingled with the Soviet delegation. We walked together to the cocktail lounge. Daily, at adjournment time, we participated in what was apparently an international substitute for the British hour of tea. On this occasion, as it happened, I walked with Mr. Khrushchev. “I don’t agree with the chairman,” he said, smiling—but there was no smile in his voice. I saw clearly then, for the first time, the identity of the real boss of the Soviet delegation.

From that moment until the final adjournment of the conference, I wasted no more time probing Mr. Bulganin; I devoted myself exclusively to an attempt to persuade Mr. Khrushchev of the merits of the Open Skies plan, but to no avail. He said the idea was nothing more than a bald espionage plot against the U.S.S.R., and to this line of argument he stubbornly adhered. He made his points laughingly—but his argument was definite and intractable.

Despite the apparent futility of doing so, I continued the discussion.
urged upon him the value of an effective plan in which both sides could trust. In view of his assertions that the U.S.S.R. had nothing but peaceful intentions while the NATO powers were planning aggressive war, it was greatly to his advantage, I said, to use every legitimate opportunity to keep his government informed of all NATO moves in return for giving NATO the same important privileges in the U.S.S.R. I told him also that we in the United States would accept the Soviet plan of fixed posts if they would accept ours of aerial inspection. His protests were, of course, spurious. Khrushchev's own purpose was evident—at all costs to keep the U.S.S.R. a closed society. He would permit no effective penetration of Soviet national territory or discovery of its military secrets, no matter what reciprocal opportunities were offered to him. Of course, he was aware that without agreement of any kind there was already available to the Soviet government a vast volume of information about us which was constantly being accumulated at little or no cost from United States newspapers, road maps, aerial photographs, magazines, journals, and government reports—some of it of types that could not be obtained even from aerial reconnaissance.

There was this to say for Mr. Khrushchev. As a member of a dictatorial government, protecting his country's own military and economic fabric from foreign eyes, while having available a fairly well filled-in picture of the military strength, dispositions, and capacity of others, he was, in a selfish nationalistic sense, partly right in the course he pursued. But in the same sense he was also partly wrong, for uncontrolled armaments might well lead in the long run to the destruction of his own country. Certainly for a world statesman, ostensibly concerned with the future peace and well-being of mankind, such a course would be egregiously wrong. Khrushchev, however, does not want peace, save on his own terms and in ways that will aggrandize his own power. He is blinded by his dedication to the Marxist theory of world revolution and Communist domination. He cares nothing for the future happiness of the peoples of the world—only for their regimented employment to fulfill the Communist concept of world destiny. In our use of the word, he is not, therefore, a statesman, but rather a powerful, skillful, ruthless, and highly ambitious politician.

There were, of course, subjects other than the Open Skies plan discussed at the conference. However, once the true intentions of the Communists were made manifest, the conversations, except on this one subject, seemed to become more and more pro forma—an exercise to be completed. Most of it revolved around the problems of a divided Germany.

Here again, the Soviets, though insistently protesting their desire for a peaceful and just resolution of an unnatural situation in Germany, indicated that they would never permit reunification of that country on the basis of free elections by all of its people. I asked Mr. Khrushchev several times: “In view of your repeated declaration that the Soviet concern is for the welfare of the masses and that the people will always prefer a Communist society, why do you fear the result of a free election?” “The German people,” he answered at once, “have not yet had time to be educated in the great advantage of Communism! Within a few years this will all be changed.”

I took great satisfaction in telling him that the entire Western world would cheerfully abide by the decision of the German electorate, regardless of the outcome. He seemed uncomfortable but reiterated that within a few years the West would not dare propose such a plan.

It was impossible to determine whether the Soviet attitude reflected primarily a fear of a reunited Germany or a desire to extend Communist influence and domination in the West. Possibly it reflected a combination of reasons.

The Soviets talked much of a disarmed and neutral Germany, a concept that, in our conviction, could be nothing but a prelude to final Communist domination of the area; indeed, the history of the prior decade had furnished ample justification for such a conviction.

Moreover, we had obligations to Chancellor Konrad Adenauer and the Federal Republic of Germany. No matter how harmless a Soviet proposal might appear, we were determined to do nothing that might injure the Chancellor or weaken Western resolution to sustain freedom in the German Republic. Though the Soviets continued to reject our proposal that Germany be reunited through free and properly supervised elections, we were quite ready, in order to quiet their fears of such an election, to provide guarantees against any resurgence of Hitlerism or any possibility that Germany might one day become a threat to the safety of the Soviet Union. Arguments on this point were long and seemingly got nowhere. Furthermore, the Soviets insisted that NATO was an organization with aggressive purposes and that its existence made impossible any thought of unifying Germany.

At one point in the seemingly fruitless talk, I reminded the conferees that I had been reluctant to agree to defer talking about the satellite countries and the threatening activities of international Communism. In contrast to this prohibition, I was glad we could talk candidly about the question of Germany and NATO. I wanted, I said, to dispel a fear. I looked pointedly at Marshal Zhukov. Speaking without notes I said to him that he knew that as soldier to soldier I had never knowingly uttered an untrue word to him. He knew, I emphasized, that he could believe me now. There were moral and practical reasons, I pointed out, why NATO could not be an aggressive force. These were self-evident. But if,
further assurance was needed I would give it. Rather than impede the future of the German people by a concern over that republic’s presence in NATO, I said, then insofar as it was possible for the United States to enforce its pledged word, I would say emphatically that there was no need for the Soviets to fear that situation.

Finally, Foster and I, and our delegation, seriously discussed the wisdom of leaving the meeting abruptly as a protest against obvious Soviet resistance to any logical solution to the problem. But by this time it had become evident to us that the Soviet delegation wanted in the final communiqué some kind of “paper agreement” that would be acceptable to world opinion. So we decided to sit out the session patiently to determine exactly what they wanted. In our private consultations we pondered this seemingly paradoxical situation; there was obviously no way of composing the diametrically opposed viewpoints expressed by the West and the East respecting Germany’s future.

As all this went on, there were other social gatherings. One formal occasion on the evening of July 22 was a dinner for all delegations—given by the President of the Swiss Republic, Max Petitpierre. The following noon the United States returned the courtesy by entertaining Swiss officials at a luncheon.

I had an interesting and revealing meeting with Marshal Zhukov at my villa. Zhukov, a great personal friend of Stalin’s immediately following World War II, and acclaimed as a Soviet hero, had been recalled in 1946 from Berlin for service in Moscow. Then, inexplicably, something cost him his standing with the Soviet hierarchy. Whatever his offense, he was sent into virtual exile and was almost unheard of until long after Stalin’s death. For a time I suspected that he was dead. However, a number of years later his name began again to appear in the Soviet news, and before the conference in Geneva he had been appointed Defense Minister of the Soviet Union. Whether this was the result of another reversal of Soviet opinion or whether he was being groomed for Geneva because of his anticipated influence in presenting the Soviet case to me, we did not know. In any event, several members of my staff, early in the conference, began to receive veiled but far from subtle suggestions, usually couched in the form of speculation and seemingly prompted by sheer curiosity, about whether “The President might want to see his old friend Zhukov.” I decided to follow up on these heavy-handed hints in the hope that the marshal might be able to give me some explanation of the inconsistencies that seemed always to characterize Russian attitudes and pronouncements.

So I invited him to luncheon, and he promptly accepted. My inter-

preter was Ambassador Bohlen; Marshal Zhukov’s was Troyanovsky. The first part of our meeting was given over to pleasant reminiscences about the war and immediate postwar events.

Once we began to talk about the serious subjects engaging the attention of the conference, however, it became crystal clear that Zhukov was no longer the same man he had been in 1945. In our wartime association he had been an independent, self-confident man who, while obviously embracing Communist doctrine, was always ready to meet cheerfully with me on any operational problem and to cooperate in finding a reasonable solution. This he did on his own; on one occasion he had even abruptly dismissed his political adviser, Andrei Vishinsky, telling him to leave the room so that the two of us might talk confidentially. In many ways it was evident then that Zhukov was just what he appeared to be—a highly important man in the Soviet government, perhaps second only to Stalin himself. During my visit to Moscow in 1945 this evaluation of his position and influence was many times reaffirmed. Now in Geneva, ten years later, he was a subdued and worried man. In a low monotone he repeated to me the same arguments that had been presented to the conference by the chairman of the Soviet delegation. This was not ordinary talk; he spoke as if he was repeating a lesson that had been drilled into him until he was letter perfect. He was devoid of animation, and he never smiled or joked, as he used to do. My old friend was carrying out orders of his superiors. I obtained nothing from this private chat other than a feeling of sadness.⁶

As the conference days passed, the Soviets evinced increasing interest in the final communiqué. The custom of inflicting these documents on the public had become and still remains rather fixed: on the opening day each delegation details its own representative to a combined committee charged with drafting the final joint report. This work goes on steadily throughout the conference. Each representative reports daily to his own delegation concerning emerging areas of agreement and of difference. Hence, we knew that the Soviets wanted a series of meaningless generalities dealing with peace, coexistence, and good intentions. We would not agree to this. We wanted to establish a basis for later negotiation of specific

⁶ On July 27 I wrote him:

“During one of our conversations at Geneva, you mentioned that you liked to fish with spinning equipment. I promised to send you one of the types that we use in this country in the hope that you might like it.

“I trust that you will catch a lot of big ones with it, and have a lot of enjoyment during the process.

“It was fine to see you again—possibly some day I shall have the pleasure of once more meeting with you personally. . . .”
agreements—pledges made to the world, so worded that every citizen could, by the later actions of the governments involved, know whether promises were being kept or broken, and who could be held responsible.

In the matter of broadening contacts between East and West, the Soviets talked about quotas and limits. We argued for the principle of free exchange of ideas, documents, addresses, visitors, governmental and business groups, and scholars. In this area we preferred to negotiate on the principle involved, leaving details to our respective Foreign Offices.

We wanted, also, an unequivocal pledge to authorize free elections in Germany, by all its people, preceding the establishment of a unified government for the entire country, which could decide to be pro-Western, pro-Communist, or neutral. We indicated that unless this pledge should be made by all four powers, the United States would not sign the communiqué. Eventually the Russians agreed.

The final meetings were exceedingly tedious as arguments on minutiae went on interminably. But at last it was done. The communiqué took the form of a joint directive to our Foreign Ministers outlining the tasks they were to undertake in furthering the general agreements reached at the Summit Conference. The most important paragraphs, with explanatory material omitted, were:

**European Security in Germany:**

For the purpose of establishing European security with due regard to the legitimate interests of all nations and their inherent right to individual and collective self-defense, the Ministers are entrusted to consider various proposals, including the following:

A security pact for Europe or for part of Europe including provisions for inclusion of member nations of an obligation not to resort to force and to deny assistance to an aggressor; limitation, control and inspection in regard to armed forces and armaments; establishment between East and West of a zone in which the disposition of armed forces would be subject to mutual agreement; and also to consider other possible proposals pertaining to the solution of this problem.

The heads of government have agreed the settlement of the German question and the reunification of Germany by free elections shall be carried out in conformity with the national interests of the German people and the interests of European security.

**Disarmament**

The four heads of government

Desirous of removing the threat of war and lessening the burden of armaments

Convinced of the necessity, for secure peace and the welfare of mankind, of achieving a system for the control and reduction of all armaments and armed forces under effective safeguards

Recognizing that achievements in this field would release mass material resources to be devoted to the peaceful economic development of nations, for raising their well-being, as well as for assistance to underdeveloped countries

Agree: for these purposes to work together to develop an acceptable system of disarmament through the Subcommittee of the United Nations Disarmament Committee.

**Development of contacts between East and West**

The Foreign Ministers should, by means of experts, study measures, including those possible in organs and agencies of the United Nations which could (a) bring about a progressive elimination of barriers which interfere with free communication and peaceful trade between people; and (b) bring about freer contacts and exchanges as are of the mutual advantage of the countries and people concerned.

The Foreign Ministers of the Four Powers will meet at Geneva during October to initiate their consideration of these questions.

Before leaving Geneva I said, "Only history will tell the true worth and real value of our session together. The follow-through from this beginning by our respective governments will be decisive in the measure of this conference." We watched and waited to detect the results of the meeting.

On July 25 I wrote to my brother Milton:

At the moment, I can't possibly make an objective appraisal of the final results of Geneva. There is no doubt in my mind that in the few days we were there I personally gained insight and understanding that I could never have achieved otherwise. I think, too, that the personal contacts—in some cases, the friendships—that were developed there alone made the trip worthwhile.

The follow-through was to be tested at the Foreign Ministers’ meeting scheduled to convene in October.

* * *

In the period between the Summit Conference and the Foreign Ministers' meeting, I became ill. Before Foster left to attend the meeting he came to Denver so that we could confer in my hospital room. He had prepared a draft of a reply to Mr. Bulganin, who had asked us for a further explanation of my July proposal for exchanging “blueprints” of military establishments. Inadvertently, Foster had omitted my statement to the Soviet delegation at Geneva that if they would accept an aerial inspection system, I was quite ready to accept their proposition for ground teams. With this correction made, I signed the letter to Bulganin.
Foster felt that preparations for the Foreign Ministers’ meeting were going well. We went over in detail the proposals we were preparing to make to implement the directives of the Summit Conference, especially those on German reunification and the broadening of East-West contacts.

Our problem was to find policies which would not rebuff the Soviets’ apparently conciliatory attitude in the Geneva communiqué (if it was genuine) but at the same time would not expose us to any individual danger if the Soviets were intent only on using the forthcoming meeting as a tactical maneuver.

Foster reported on the problems involved in completing our proposals for initial disarmament. There were among our top advisers conflicting views. Thus, some felt that nuclear controls could constitute a good first step. Others felt that nuclear disarmament must be part of an agreement for complete disarmament.

Foster returned to Washington, but eight days later came back to see me again. He had little more to report on preparations for the conference which was soon to convene, but with his usual care he was making sure that we had, between us, an up-to-the-minute understanding of what our proposals would be and what we wanted to do.

During the course of the Foreign Ministers’ conference, Foster frequently reported by cable from Geneva. When it seemed desirable, I would send him suggestions. For several days the conference seemed to go forward fairly well. While no large areas of mutual agreement had been blocked out, the talks were friendly and on important points it seemed that progress was possible.

Then a short recess of several days was taken. When the conference reconvened, Molotov returned from Moscow to deliver a speech that Foster described in this cable to me:

Dear Mr. President:

Molotov returned from Moscow this morning and this afternoon delivered one of the most cynical and uncompromising speeches which I have ever heard. It involved a sweeping rejection of all Western proposals for European security and German reunification. It repudiated the provision of directive that reunification and European security were closely linked. It stated we could not now speak of “all German elections” as agreed in directive, and in effect said Soviet Union would never permit eastern Germany to be reunified with western Germany except under conditions which clearly implied the communization of all of Germany.

I should welcome any guidance you can get to me by tomorrow. I am deeply disappointed as I know you are at this apparent frustration of the hopes which were born at Geneva and to which you contributed so greatly. However, this development here coupled with developments in Near East seem to me to indicate deliberate Soviet decision to take measures which they must have seen would inevitably involve a sharp increase of tension and resumption of cold-war struggle.

In my reply, I said that I would approve of Foster’s taking the position stated by him in the following portion of his cable:

... The clear breach of Summit directive creates a condition where no confidence can be placed on agreements with Soviet Government and that we shall have to conduct our relations accordingly. We feel Soviet position was taken with full recognition of consequences and without any apparent desire to avoid them. It means that further debate on disarmament and contacts will have little substance and we shall probably quickly reach end of our agenda.

In the light of the failure in October, we felt it necessary to re-evaluate the results of the July 1955 Summit meeting.

The Summit Conference had been hailed by the world as a great success, even a diplomatic triumph for the West. It had been held in a cordial atmosphere, which represented a sharp departure from the vitriolic recriminations which characterized so many meetings in the past. Agreements had been reached to study ways of increasing friendship between the peoples of the West and of the Soviet Union, and these contacts could, we thought, presage the beginning of a more open society in the U.S.S.R. More surprising had been the Soviet agreement that “the settlement of the German question and the reunification of Germany by free elections shall be carried out in conformity with the national interests of the German people and the interests of European security,” an agreement which, if acted on, would have done much to re-establish stability and progress among the peoples of the European continent. Most spectacular, in the eyes of the press and public, had been our opportunity to demonstrate to the world, in the Open Skies proposal, the dedication of the United States to world peace and disarmament and our sincerity in offering a concrete way in which we would participate.

Then disillusionment had followed. At the October Foreign Ministers’ conference, held in the same room as the Summit Conference, the Soviets had repudiated every measure to which they had agreed in July. Unfortunately, this received less attention in the press than had the earlier agreements; attention had been diverted by other things, such as a crisis in the royal family of Britain, the sale of arms by Czechoslovakia to Egypt, and my own illness. But to those of us responsible for the conduct of foreign relations, the Soviet duplicity was a grievous disappointment indeed.
In the final analysis, however, I believe the Geneva Conference represented a limited success. The record was established: All could now see the nature of Soviet diplomatic tactics as contrasted with those of the Free World. Peoples had been given a glowing picture of hope and, though it was badly blurred by the Soviets, at least the outlines of the picture remained. Moreover, and in spite of what happened thereafter, the cordial atmosphere of the talks, dubbed the “Spirit of Geneva,” never faded entirely. Indeed, the way was opened for some increase in intercourse between East and West—there began, between the United States and Russia, exchanges of trade exhibitions, scientists, musicians, and other performers; visits were made by Mikoyan and Kozlov to the United States, and returned, by Vice President Nixon and my brother Milton, to the Soviet Union and Poland. These were small beginnings, but they could not have transpired in the atmosphere prevailing before Geneva.

In the autumn of 1955, lying in a hospital bed in Denver, I could not help thinking: What a disappointment it must have been to Winston Churchill not to have been able to represent Her Majesty’s government in this critical period. Three months before the Summit meeting, on April 5, 1955, he had resigned his office, thus bringing to a close, save for the retention of his seat in Parliament, an active public career of more than half of a century, a career which ranged from his serving as a subaltern in the British cavalry to his twice being named head of the British government. During at least one of the most interesting periods of his life I was privileged to be intimately associated with him.

In war he was aggressive, creatively combative, and inspirational in his leadership. Under the organizational arrangement by which the United States and Great Britain fought the war in Europe, he and President Roosevelt together were my joint superiors, exercising their direction over my command through the combined British-American Chiefs of Staff. In most questions arising out of the conduct of the war, he and I found ourselves almost always in full agreement. On those few occasions when we did not see eye to eye, another splendid trait of this many-sided man was unmistakably discernible. On official matters he would argue long, earnestly, and intensively, but no matter what the depth of his convictions, and his fervor in upholding them, never once did he make of the incident anything personal; the quality of our friendship was never diluted in any way. With the war won and the sunlight of public acclaim focused upon him, he was generous in his apportionment of credit to all who had served with or under him. Sometimes he was impatient (what strong-minded man is not?), but I know of no individual who was closely associated with him who did not come out of the war with increased admiration and affection for this man who had so gallantly, so devotedly served the cause of his own nation and of the entire Free World.

I knew him also in the days when, with the war in the Pacific not yet decided, he and his party were rejected by the British electorate and he perforce went back, on the world stage, to relative obscurity. But it was relative only. As interested in world affairs as ever before, and leader of the opposition, he was still Winston Churchill, orator, statesman, historian—almost the personification of Britain.

He came back to power as Prime Minister in the fall of 1951. A year later I was elected President of the United States. In these positions our relationship officially had to rest on a different plane; on the personal side it remained just as close and satisfying as it had ever been. For more than two years, as the heads of our respective governments, we communicated regularly with each other and took every possible opportunity to meet for the type of talk we had always enjoyed.

When finally he laid down the mantle of his high office, I could not help feeling that, for me, a treasured partnership had been broken; but never will I lose any of the affection and admiration I hold for him personally or the great sense of obligation I feel toward one who did so much to preserve freedom, honor, and opportunity in vast portions of the earth.